



LMSD/554788  
20 February 1959

Mr. Roy W. Johnson, Director  
Advanced Research Projects Agency  
Room 3E160, Pentagon  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Johnson:

The article on the subject of our TV Camera and its development which appeared in the New York Times on February 12, 1959, was very disturbing to me. I understand through a channel which you will recognize that you too were disturbed.

I have personally investigated some of the circumstances which led up to the newspaper article and members of my staff have investigated carefully the entire situation.

It is very clear to me that the writer of the article made incorrect assumptions without the slightest provocation by any employee of our organization. I am sure that you are aware of the continuing difficulties which your organization as well as ours have faced in the publicity of the Discoverer series and Weapon System 117-L. The very early releases and speculations that were made which related our work to a system for reconnaissance remain prominently in the minds of many of the press writers, and it seems to me that there is some merit in having some of our people join with yours, and perhaps those of the Air Force, to plan ways and means to counteract this misconception.

Let me now refer to some of the details of this situation. In the first place I have attached hereto a classified letter which was directed to me from our Executive Vice President on the problems associated with speculation of the press. As a result of this letter there was repeated emphasis on previous instructions regarding the sensitivity of such allusions. All of my staff are completely aware of the problem and in my opinion are conducting themselves in accordance with my instructions.

I have also attached the official release made from our news bureau here at Sunnyvale. I suggest your particular attention to the second sentence

NRO review(s) completed.

Mr. Roy W. Johnson

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of the fourth paragraph, which is a very clear statement that the TV system was not developed for any satellite program. This release went to all of the attendees of a small press conference held in Sunnyvale on that day. The New York Times west coast representative was present and he was handed a copy of this release. There was a question and answer period during which the two inventors were present. Mr. Nicholas Marshall was asked the question by one of the reporters present "Did you develop the TV Camera for use in the Discoverer Satellite?" Answer "No." A second question followed which was "Will this be used in any of your satellite work?" The answer was "No, it was developed primarily with regard to the problems of recording airframe and structural problems of missiles."

If you will refer to the news release again you will note that we have alluded to our space work, and I call your attention to this fact because I want you to know that the primary purpose of the press conference was to indicate the importance to us of the change in our name (Lockheed Missiles and Space Division). It is inconceivable that a careful science reporter could find any connection between the TV Camera and the Discoverer series from these words.

Let me repeat that the concern of myself, as well as that of our corporate officers, was great indeed over this incident. I do not believe however that any of our people can share any degree of responsibility whatsoever in the article as written and released by the New York Times. I do believe, and therefore suggest, your serious consideration of a mutual effort on the part of all organizations concerned to use all of our ingenuity to devise releases to the newspaper fraternity which will effectively prevent recurrence of articles with the implication of this one.

In the event that you wish to discuss this matter further, you can be assured of my willingness to do so.

Sincerely,

(5)

L. Eugene Root  
Vice President and General Manager

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**Attachments:**

- (1) Letter dated 2/2/59,  to L. E. Root - LMSD/554777
- (2) News Release re LMSD TV System

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